

Owning Your Own Health Committee

October 15, 2014

Old Jail Conference Room

9:30 a.m.

APPROVED

Present: Mack Cook, Ted Schiele, Brooke Jobin, Ken Foresti, Steve Wright, Ashley Masucci, Don Barber, Beth Miller, Leslie Moscovitz, Bev Chin (arrived at 9:35 a.m.)

Call to Order

Mr. Cook called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes of August 20, 2014

It was MOVED by Mr. Schiele, seconded by Ms. Jobin, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2014 meeting as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Barber reported the wellness resolution that was recommended by this Committee was adopted by the Board of Directors and sent to each municipality. He has received responses that municipalities have either discussed it or will be discussing it; the ones that have had discussions received some pushback from their boards about wellness. He stated there is a lot of education that needs to be done and he has extended an offer to work with them. He will be going out to municipalities to introduce the orientation manual and to have conversations about what the Consortium is about. He will also be asking to meet with their bargaining units to talk about the Consortium and is hoping to change the view that this is not something we purchase but own together.

Mr. Barber reported the recertification process has begun and all benefit clerks are aware of it and have the information they need to get started in notifying their employees and dependents.

Ms. Chin arrived at 9:35 a.m.

Flu Clinics

Ms. Masucci said she recently met with the ProAct Help Desk and gathered information about the process that has been undertaken for the flu clinics and the experiences that have been reported. From the Help Desk perspective things are going well and people know what is going on with the flu clinic cost being covered by the Consortium. She said there does appear to be a little confusion because in some places it has been advertised as the Consortium's flu clinic but at each municipal group they have been hearing not only it being called the Consortium flu clinic but also the municipality's flu clinic. She said because the scheduling has been handled in different ways and the communication by each employer is a little different, but contains the same message, there has been a little bit of miscommunication by those members who are looking to go to a clinic outside of their employer. She recommended that next year there be consistency in the scheduling. She also recommended that everyone be scheduled sooner to allow more time for communication to be more effective and consistent across-the-board.

Ms. Moscowitz asked what the impact was and if the communication issue was a branding image or related to people going to other clinics. Ms. Masucci believes it was both. Within the Consortium it has been referred to as a Consortium flu clinic; however, employees refer to it at the individual municipality's flu clinic. She said a benefit of having it a Consortium flu clinic is the availability to members and knowing they can go anywhere. She said once the dates were confirmed they were shared with everyone and information that became available was shared as soon as it was available and information was also posted to the website. She suggested starting to work on this much earlier next year and to have July 1st as a possible cut-off target date. Mr. Barber agreed that a date could be set earlier but noted marketing would not have to begin that early.

Ms. Masucci said she has not experienced any negative comments from the flu clinics but has heard many positive comments. Mr. Schiele suggested using the flu clinics as an opportunity to make people more aware of the Consortium in general. Mr. Barber and Ms. Masucci will be putting together a report on the flu clinic for the next meeting.

Although the flu clinics have been discussed in many different venues it was the consensus that next year work should be done to improve communication to make it clear and consistent with the message coming from the Consortium regardless of who the host is.

Mr. Barber said the Board recognizes the need to get information out about the Consortium and there are efforts underway to raise awareness of the Consortium such as: the education retreat, the orientation manual, and the newsletter.

Update on Bio-Metric Screening

Summaries of the surveys that were conducted and a review of the Biometric Screening Pilot Program were distributed to members. Mr. Schiele explained the process used for the surveys; Mr. Cook said he will get the pre-surveys to Mr. Schiele so that information can be added in.

Mr. Schiele explained issues they ran into with getting a good comparison of the two pilots which were very different. He noted the following:

- Those who participated in the pilot programs thought it was a good use of their time and it was close to unanimous that participants would do it again;
- Participants were satisfied with both of the vendors; and
- There were only a few responses to the coaching and it was unclear how many people followed through

Mr. Cook said he believes this Committee is at a point where it needs to decide if a wellness effort will work and if so what would need to be done to make it work in the current environment where he believes there are roadblocks to moving a wellness program forward.

Issues Mr. Cook identified include:

- Lack of support by "top support" including elected officials. He said any wellness program will need to be incentivized. He believes there will have to be a money component to entice employees to participate and is not sure if elected officials will agree, especially in the current fiscal climate and pressures of the tax cap. He said

many elected leaders are not long term thinkers and can only plan for one or two budget years in the future.

- Lack of employee motivation. Mr. Cook said there is a lack of equity among municipal employees in health care programs. In an environment where employees are paying 15-20% of the health insurance premium it is important to employees but there isn't the financial stake that employees in the private sector have.
- He questioned if wellness is relevant to employees in the municipal environment because many carry large banks of compensatory, vacation, personal, and sick time, and there are other avenues to absorb sickness in the workplace.
- Health care is a mandatory subject of negotiations in collective bargaining and there is no financial incentive included in rates between those who take care of themselves and those who do not.
- The Consortium is unable to dictate to any municipality how it should handle wellness; therefore, if one municipality were to step out and try a wellness program it may not impact the Consortium financially as a whole.

He questioned what can be done to keep the rates down because he believes wellness is the only long-term defense to achieve that. The Consortium is operating as efficiently as possible and the current 5% premium increase cannot be sustained without making a change.

Mr. Wright said he agreed with most of Mr. Cook's statement and feels it is investment from the top that is needed and every municipality has to buy in and they have to demonstrate it

Ms. Moscovitz agrees the support has to start at the top but also she believes if peers can be brought on-board and working outward there can be more impact.

Mr. Schiele said if a determination is made that a wellness program going forward is a benefit one thing about the screening program is that it's an instant eye-opener for people. There is real information that comes out of it that provides an opportunity for having sustainable change.

Ms. Moscovitz said there are people who tend to never participate in wellness types of programs and they are usually the ones who can benefit the most. It was suggested that a screening event could be a "launch" to a wellness program.

A suggestion was made that the Consortium provide an incentive versus individual employers. Mr. Cook said this might be more doable than asking municipalities to be the incentive provider. It was also suggested that the Consortium could structure a rebate program back to those individuals who met goals through a screening program.

Mr. Cook questioned if there are resources to begin to draft a program and whether a wellness program currently exists within a consortium-type setting. Mr. Foresti said Cayuga County is a couple of steps ahead in developing a wellness program.

Mr. Barber said there are only two municipalities represented at these meetings and that isn't acceptable. The resolution adopted by the Board of Directors included having a representative from each municipality on the Committee. There needs to be culture change and to make that process begin there has to be participation and sharing of information.

Next Agenda

At the next meeting it was agreed there should be a review of an existing wellness program to gain an understanding of how it operates in this environment Mr. Barber will work with Mr. Foresti in gathering information.

Mr. Barber said the bio-metric screening pilot programs were run with two different organizations and there should be discussion of next steps and how to respond to those organizations. It was agreed there should be discussion at the next meeting about what the pros and cons are of each of the two programs. Mr. Barber will contact the organizations and provide an update on where this stands with the Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, Administrative Clerk